

Austin City Concil Transcripts - 8/20/2012

[10:04:20]

I'm austin mayor lee

fingwell.

A quorum is present so I'll
call this special called
meeting on august 20, 2012,
at 10:07 a.m.

We're meeting in the boards
and commission rooms, 201
west second street, austin,
texas.

On our agenda, items 1, 2
and 3 have already been
completed so we'll go to
item 4, presentation of the
city's proposed budget for
fiscal year 2012 and 13.

We've all had the material
for about a week now, so the
way I'd like to proceed is
after a brief introduction
by the budget officer, and
then we can go directly to
questions.

All the department directors
are here, beginning with
parks and recreation and
then library and health and
human services and finally
planning and development
review.

So with that, I will turn it
over to the budget director.

>> Good morning, mayor and
members of the council.

Deputy cfo.

We had initially agendized
this presentation for last
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15th,
And the discussion about the
bond program went a little
bit long so we got pushed
until today.

That's why the presentation
says august 15th on the
date.

There were a couple items
that we did get to on
AUGUST 15th.

The first one being setting
the maximum tax rate.

That was not adopting that

[10:06:00]

tax rate, that was just
setting the maximum the
council would consider as we
go through budget
proceedings and council
chose to adopt a maximum tax
5 cents per 100 of
taxable value.

We set the hearing for
fiscal year 2012 and 13, the
first of the public hearings
will be tomorrow and the
second will be on august --
I'm sorry, not tomorrow, the
first will be on
august 23rd and the second
WILL BE ON AUGUST 30th.

And then the part of the
work session we did not get
to last week was the
departmental discussions,
and so we have here today
ready to respond to any
questions you may have about
their presentation parks and
recreation, library, health
and human services, as well
as planning and development
review.

We're going to be back
before council on wednesday,
AUGUST 22nd, FOR A FULL
Day of budget presentations.

We'll have presentations
,
as well as austin research
recovery, code compliance
and we'll end the day with

austin water utility and
energy.

We'll be back on the 23rd
and the 30th with public
hearings on the budget and
tax rates as well as various
utility rates that are
proposed to increase, and
then our budget readings and
adoptions are scheduled for
september 10th through
12th.

That's the remainder of the
budget calendar and unless
there are any questions I'm
going to turn it over to
parks and recreation
director sara hencery.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:

Thank you.

You are welcome to bring all
the help you need.

>> I brought it.

Good morning, mayor and
members of council, and I'm
going to run through this
really quickly so there's
plenty of time for everyone
else.

I'll start out just real
quickly with our source of
funds which, again, golf
fund, of course,, our c.i.p.

Reimbursements and grants.

The majority of our
department's budget is

[10:08:00]

general fund.

Our uses of our funds -- i
need to do this.

Our parks planning
development and operations,
support services, other,
which is transfers, and
then, of course, community
services takes the bulk of
it, about 54.5%.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:

Sara, I don't know if you
heard this or not, but we're
going to go directly to q
and a.

>> Okay.

We'll just leave it alone.

>>

>> Mayor Leffingwell: So
questions on the parks
department budget?

Councilmember morrison.

>> Morrison: Sara, one of
the questions that arose
last year was the new fee
structure for use of the
parks, and it was a
structure that it's a
certain fee up to 600 people
as part of the event, and
then the fee changes for
over 600.

And one of the issues that
had arisen is that
discontinue use, I would
say, nature of us had
jumped.

If you had 600 people
there's one fee.

If 601, you have
another fee.

There was a response that
said if I recall properly
something to the effect if
we had to do it per person
it would be more expensive
per person.

Anyway, I'm still hearing
feedback from that
especially -- well, not
necessarily especially, but

secondarily from no one nonprofits
who are having a hard time
paying these fees.

I wonder if there's -- two
things.

One, could we give some more
thought to trying to smooth
that out in a fair way so
that 600, 601 jump doesn't
happen.

And then secondly, do we
have different -- a
different fee structure for
nonprofits or is it the same
nonprofit and for profit?

>> This is angela means, our

[10:10:03]

budget and finance manager,
let her answer, but always
we can look at that.

I think the resolution that
was recently -- or the one
that's coming forward about
looking at rental fees or
special events, I think
that's something we can look
at across the city and
looking at the different
jump of fees but also number
of users, nonprofits,
possibly separating out the
maintenance fee, that may
help some because I think in
some cases we want to make
sure we're protecting the
investment of the city from
a maintenance perspective,

but we don't want to make it
so cost prohibitive groups
can't use the park.

So angela.

>> Good morning, angela
means.

I would like to say that
what we've done in the
department over the last six
months [inaudible] how we
calculate our fees and
looking at the cost of
service.

And so we're doing a more
indepth analysis on all of
our fees.

And so this is one that we
are taking a look at.

Not only just how we
calculate the fee, but how
affordable it's for the
services that the
individuals will enjoy.

So we are not -- they are at
this time we are
approximately 60% complete
of taking a look at the
majority of our community
services fees and we hope to
have that assignment done at
the end of this month, early
september.

>> Morrison: So in the
budget proposal that we have
up in our offices, are the
fees the same as last year's
just from --

>> yes.

>> Morrison: And you said
that you hoped to have it
finished, I'm sorry, by the
end of september?

>> That's correct.

We've been working on it the
last six months.

We have run into a couple of
snags just because it's very
extensive, but we're not
there at this time.

>> Morrison: So do you
expect you might have a
recommendation that comes
out of it to change -- so i
presume -- maybe one
scenario is we adopt the

fees as they are, but then
look forward to adjusting
them early in the fiscal
year?

>> I think that's probably
the best way.

[10:12:00]

The other thing is we want
to have to work with our
friends in budget office to
make sure that we're not
taking away revenue that's
anticipated and already
calculated into our budget
and then coming up with
something that's less than
that, having to find
reductions somewhere else.

I think there is a way and
what we want to do is look
at this very holistically.

Some of our parks are in
very high demand, some of
others don't get used.

We've looked at the
maintenance fee versus cost
of rental.

This is something that could
be sort of intertwined into
sort of the upcoming efforts
that we may be looking at
for the special events and
then use of parks, how we
balance that with how we
maintain that park and just
having somebody from a group
of nonprofit individuals who

are there, hours of use.

We have to look at all those things.

But I think like she said it is cumbersome because we're looking at number of hours, number of people, the day, Saturdays and Sundays are our biggest days, and then how we balance that with keeping the park open for public use, keeping it open, and then having rentals.

So it's almost like a matrix that we'll have to do but we can always change it after the fact.

>> Morrison: Are you saying you will also take

into consideration, think
about could there be a
different fee schedule for
nonprofits?

>> Yes, we will absolutely
look at that.

>>

>> Morrison: Thank you so
much.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I
would like to follow up on
that.

Originally the rationale for
doing this in the first
place was two-fold, I think.

I think one was to make sure
the parks are available to

some degree at least to the
general public, and another
was damage, actual damage
done to the park.

So is there a component in
there aside from the fee to
make restoration?

I know there's normal wear
and tear, there's abnormal
wear and tear, and there's

[10:14:01]

also traumatic damage,
people pulling obstacles
across the grass and so
forth.

How do we account for that?

>> Mayor, that's a point
we're looking at very
seriously now.

That is that we have a
deposit we try to hold if
there are severe damages,
but the questions that now
are being raised for us is
that enough money when you
have complete turf damage
and it's not.

Two, if we have to resod or
re-seed.

The maintenance fee is not
adequate across the board.

If we are going to look at
this, we are looking at this
completely holistically and

perhaps there's a less fee
for noone profit to use it,
but a maintenance fee and
certainly a deposit that is
reasonable but certainly
takes care of any damages
that occur because we have
had an issue where we had
ruts that were -- created in
the park.

We lost some trees that were
damaged severely that they
died.

And we're talking about more
money than what was in the
deposit in general.

So we want to balance that
and that may be where we
can -- we're able to do
that.

It's a very good question,
it's something we need to
look at.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I do
think that's a major factor
because park maintenance is
one of the areas where we
have a severe lack of funds
to apply to that.

And when someone comes in
and does extraordinary
damage, there has to be some
way to recoup the cost of
doing that.

Councilmember riley i
believe was next and then
councilmember martinez.

>> Riley: Thanks, mayor,

and thank you, sara, for
being here.

I just have a few questions.

First on page 80 of your
presentation, there's a note
for south
district parks ground
maintenance and then the
first bullet point is parker
lane tract which we acquired
just recently.

It's a two-acre tract.

And there have been a number
of questions from the
community about what we're

[10:16:01]

planning to do with that.

Can you just elaborate on
what's in store there?

>> Well, we have limited
funds as we acquired that
property just not too long
ago, we have limited funds
to do some very small
improvements, and that is to
kind of physically clean it
up and put small
improvements in it.

And then, of course, the one
is going to cover
both parks.

But we're just now -- we
have to get into it, we have
to sit down and talk to

stakeholders, find out what
their top priorities are as
far as development, and i
think from a capital
standpoint, and I need to go
back and look, I believe
it's very little amenities
because they didn't want a
lot of amenities.

It's a neighborhood park and
they didn't want this to be
seen as a big destination
park.

But our first chore is get
it cleaned up and in good
shape.

>> Riley: Okay.

So not a lot of
infrastructure going in.

>> Not a lot of
infrastructure.

I would like to follow up
and tell what you
infrastructure and I will do
that and send this to the
city manager's office so
everyone can see that.

>> Riley: Great.

One other thing that I don't
see in the presentation is
project saltillo.

There's better questions on
this subject about the
possibility of adding a
half-time employee or making
other adjustments that would
make it easier for folks to

make use of plaza saltillo
for events.

A couple ideas came up as to
how we could do that, adding
smaller time blocks or
lowering the electricity
fee, adding a maintenance
fee.

Could you tell us where we
are on all that?

>> Right now we have a staff
team that is looking at
this.

That, again, goes back to
the question both
councilmember morrison and
the mayor talked to me about
which is the maintenance
fee, it being able to help

us maintain that area.

It's an area we're not able
to get to like we want to.

[10:18:01]

We're not doing so much
mowing but we pick up the
trash, blow it out and then
we go and there's not an
ongoing presence there which
does present some problems
sometimes.

By looking at a maintenance
fee that would be more
applicable to the users, and
I think there's a lot of
people that want to use this
area and it's certainly

conducive to that, we might be able to fund a part-time person that would be more visible, which would mean when there are events, someone would be present, make sure it looks like for an event whether it's a celebration or some type of event, and then keep the trash picked up and keep it looking nice.

The other thing is by working with maybe some other nonprofits that might want to use the park, for instance, maybe the farmers market, we believe we might be able to form a partnership where we could have them help us in some landscaping and some work,

but also some eyes and ears
on the park which will help
keep it -- the more people
in a park, the less we see a
problem.

The more we can encourage
partnerships from nonprofits
the better off we'll be.

It's an area we need to
focus on, have more staff
presence, but we need to
encourage more of a
partnership where we can
create more of a positive
impact and keep it open and
clean.

>> Riley: I appreciate
your efforts on that.

Do you expect we need to

make some changes in the
budget?

>> Right now we just
literally take a staff crew
that drives by, they empty
trash, pick it up.

The problem with some of the
areas that have higher
visibility and we start to
see increase in use is when
you can only get to it once
a day or once every two
days, the trash sits.

If it blows, it's blowing
all over the neighborhood
and the businesses.

We're not creating a very
good sense of community.

We do need some presence
there, but I think between a
half-time person or
part-time person with some
partnering that we need to
develop, we can make it
work.

[10:20:00]

>> Riley: Okay.

With the budget as it stands stands
now.

>> We would have to add some
help, maybe some temporary
seasonal.

>> Riley: Not far from
there is the

mexican-american cultural
center.

There's been a lot of
interest in that.

Will it's been understaffed
since its opening and it's
been about five years back
in 2007.

The board for the macc has
repeatedly raised terms
about the availability of
supporting staffing there
and I understand the manager
morris, has
identified particular
positions as priorities.

I do see on page 9 of your
presentation a mention of
1.5 FTEs FOR [INAUDIBLE].

With that be housed at the
macc?

>> Yes, it would.

>> Riley: That would
cover -- that would
obviously help.

There was also concern,
interest in custodial or
maintenance person,
technology coordinator,
sounds like that position
might cover three of those
bullet points but not
custodial.

>> One of the things I was
able to do, bert lumbreras
and I met with stakeholders
on a number of occasions.

I pulled a person from
another position
specifically to address the
issues related to custodial
service.

We went back to the board
and asked from a staff
perspective, we felt like
keeping the facility clean
and in good working
condition was important and
they agreed so allowed
us to use that position for
the goal.

Truthful we have the same
situation at several of our
locations so by adding the
5, by moving this position
over, it gets us in the
queue sort of begin to see

where we are.

[10:22:00]

We need to do more program
to go get more people there
and we are doing that now.

As we begin to grow, we can
come back next year's budget
to look at additional
resources, but this is going
to make a huge dent helping
us.

>> Riley: And I know the
board has also asked we
consider a -- making use of
the parking places in the
lot and that could provide
another source of funds.

>> That would be huge.

>> Riley: That would be available in the next few months.

>> That will help us because I think you are going to see the parking area will be completely utilized and that bit of funding in addition to paying off those meters, the additional funding going back to the center will certainly help us fund, i think it will help us fund another full-time position, quite frankly.

>> Riley: Great.

I also wanted to ask about

the african-american
resource advisory
commission, that commission
has asked that we provide
funding to support the
efforts to develop programs
and service to maintain
staff at an american
cultural heritage district
which is apparently a new
thing that's come up and
there's a lot of community
interest in seeing what
we could do about.

That have you looked at the
possibility providing any
support in the budget for
that?

>> Honestly I have not and
we haven't put any positions
in there.

And that would -- I'll be
real honest and frank, we
would have to add positions
to be able to do that and do
it justice.

As you can see just from
looking at the barrientos
center, we can't build a
facility or have an area
providing staffing
for it.

I don't want to build
expectations and not be able
to do that right.

>> Riley: Right.

There's been a lot of
interest in additional
full-time employees for

forestry division as well as
maintenance position.

How is the forestry position
looking in the current
budget?

>> Honestly, I will say this

[10:24:01]

and this is a presentation i
did with the audit and
finance committee, we have
enough foresters to take
care of our trees every 90
years.

This is not good and it's
certainly not a good
standard for us in this

city.

We are creative and we have
an outstanding group of
people who are dealing with
more of an emergency and
[inaudible] issues than we
are maintaining our trees.

It's every city park we have
in our system.

We're busy answering
emergency calls more than we
are taking care of our
inventory of trees.

We have over 300,000 trees
in the the inventory so that
is once every 90 years
getting to awful those.

It's not good, but we're

going to continue to chip
away at things, no pun
intended, and trying to get
to them.

Staff work really hard.

They are on call on the
weekends.

But when we have a tree go
down that goes across public
land or a public street, our
crews are called out.

It's during the day, night,
weekends, and that's where
they spend the majority of
times is 311 calls and calls
that go direct to parks and
recreation.

It's rae we're actually able

to get out and maintain our
trees.

>> So you could use
additional funding to
strengthen the forestry
division?

>> We could.

It's more of a balance.

We're going to continue to
do the best we can.

We're putting new measures
in place.

Technology is going to help
a lot by the hand-held
devices and not duplicate
work orders from the 311
system which we're working

on.

A lot of it has to do with
utilizing technology and
having that technology.

Having the trained staff
that we have and hopefully
incrementally adding to
those staff members.

The more we can do that, the
better off we're going to
be.

>> Riley: In the meantime,
we'll be making progress by
making better use of
technology.

>> That's right.

>> Riley: Thanks for all

your work.

>> Thank you.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:

Councilmember martinez.

>> Martinez: Thanks,

mayor, thanks, sara, thanks,

[10:26:00]

chris, for your points.

They were many of the same
points I wanted to bring up
so I don't repeat all of
those, but I do want to ask
some questions about some
specific facilities within
the parks department.

And one, starting with the
facility we used yesterday
that I think is really just
a beautiful part of fiesta
gardens and wanted to just
kind of tee up what the
future is hold in store for
the stage area, the
grandstands leading down to
the lagoon.

I just think it's one of
those really special things
that we have that obviously
we've not put much
investment in over the
years.

Is it anywhere on our radar
screen with the
redevelopment of holly
shores?

>> Yes, it is in the -- as a matter of fact, we're asking all those questions and addressing those with public input to the holly shores plan.

The part there is we have the money to do the master plan, we don't have the money to implement it.

So we're going to come up with what I believe from what meetings we've had so far some really innovative and creative ideas that's going to take bond dollars, but I think the other exciting part is as we work towards this is the matching private funds to help us

redevelop this area.

>> Martinez: That's great
because that's a perfect
segue into the next part of
my discussion.

I'm glad you brought up
umloff I'll state publicly
if you can come to agreement
of substantial funding as a
partner, then I would
certainly hope we would
entertain a longer term
lease.

And we're hearing this not
just from umloff, from other
organizations because what
they say to us is they are
more than willing to raise
hundreds of thousands if not
millions of dollars to

improve those existing

[10:28:00]

facilities that they use and
utilize, but they can't
raise that kind of money
without a longer commitment.

>> I agree with you 100%.

Actually I'm glad to hear
you say that because, as you
know, we did that with the
sunshine camp for a 50-year
lease and we want to work
with our legal department
and do, you know, do the due
diligence.

But I agree, they can't go

out and raise \$5 million
without a longer term lease.

And the sunshine camp was
only -- they were raising
3.5 million.

Weya has committed to doing
their great work.

From a staff perspective we
want to do what's right and
we believe the only way
we're going to survive is
with these partnerships.

We'll bring to you what we
believe is a have good
proposal and we're hopeful
we'll have a proposal within
the year so we have this
one-year gap funding and
then we're able to work with

them to turn things over and
have a great partnership
like we have with the bottom
half of the land.

>> Martinez: It's my
understanding since we've
been gifted the house and
the studio, there are dozens
if not hundreds of pieces
that are not on display,
that are stored.

>> That's correct, in a
climate controlled storage
area.

There's some work we need to
do with the property, of
course, because they are
very interested and we're
fortunate to have a group
like this to want to help

us, otherwise we would be asking for a huge amount of money to have to deal with this.

>> Martinez: Great.

So the other part of the conversation that I want us to start as a council, it's been brought to at least my attention, I don't know if any of you have been approached, councilmember riley brought up the african-american heritage district, but there's other -- you know, the macc, carver, now the asian resource center this year.

A question has been posed to me as to whether or not --

because of the high demand
to rent these facilities and
utilize them for private
and/or commercial events,

[10:30:01]

whether or not it would make
sense for those culture
centers and even
african-american heritage
district to be -- this is
not an insult, I don't know
how to say this any other
way, to be better placed
under egrso or something
that is different than a
parks and rec department.

Because what we saw in the
macc and what we had to do

last year is totally change
the fee structure so that
cultural events really got
preferential treatment in
terms of fees because that's
really what it was built
for.

But because it's such an
iconic facility, people want
to hold concerts and events
and that's in super high
demand.

As you mentioned, we need to
raise more money to keep
operating and growing and
doing the things we want.

So I'm just going to tee
that up as a conversation
that I'd like to have
whether or not this council

there as a policy or
whether the manager gets
there, I think it's
something we have to think
about because we're not
going to be able to fund the
african-american heritage
district out of parks
budget.

It's just not there.

But we're going to want to
fund it.

They've already approached
us and asked chris and I to
sponsor a resolution which
I'm happy to do, but the
resolution puts it in your
hands, city manager, and
says help us identify
funding and based the parks

budget it's going to be very
difficult to do.

I'm willing to go down that
road and have that
conversation with you.

>> Councilmember, just so
you know, that doesn't
offend me and we've asked
the same questions.

We want these facilities to
be where they need to be
whether it's with us or
another city department,
we'll continue to be
supportive and do what we
need to do, even if it's a
partnership, if we do
programming and they
actually operate and manage
our fundraising arm or

whatever.

We are -- that's what we do.

But I want you to know it
doesn't offend us at all.

We've asked the same
questions, where sit best
going to be served.

And I do need to mention one
thing, umloff is in here but

[10:32:01]

it's not in the budget.

The money we have listed is
unfunded item for umloff.

>> Martinez: And then the last one, councilmember riley brought it up, where are we implementing fee parking at the macc and what does that agreement look like in terms of sharing the revenue?

>> This is kind of exciting and you may see more things coming from this one example.

We're waiting -- we want to do this holistically with the whole rainey street effort instead of come in piecemeal.

The board has approved this and send a resolution.

We're ready.

Rob spiller, we've worked
with him and steve
grassville, they are ready
to go putting the meters in,
but they want to come in,
sue edwards wants to come in
with a proposal on rainy
street.

That also includes the
mexican-american culture
center.

>> Martinez: Thank you.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:
Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: Last year in our
budget there was a proposal
that was adopted to make the

botanical gardens a fee
based -- to charge an
entrance fee, and I wanted
to ask you and this may be
something I need to submit
some formal budget questions
about, how has that worked
out?

Has attendance dropped?

Has it moved the kind of
revenue anticipated?

>> We had a slow start and
that was part of logistics.

What we thought we could do.

It wasn't working so well so
we had to take a step back.

We're now actively taking in

the funds and I don't think
we've seen a drop in
attendance, but I think
we're rethinking is that the
best way to do it versus
we're working with rob
spiller to do an analysis of
metering.

But we're also looking at
zilker and the fact we take
money at the front of the
park and backup traffic on

[10:34:01]

to barton springs.

So, again, we are trying to
look at this more
holisticly.

We're looking at steve
grassfield and rob spiller
to look at barton springs in
general, zilker park and how
we back up traffic, under
moe pack within issues with
department of transportation
and sort of the haphazard
parking that happens and
then there's issues related
to safety.

And then zilker botanical
gardens and under mopac as
well.

People get blocked in.

Obviously it would come back
to council, but we're
rethinking is taking money
for an entrance fee to pay

for coming in the gardens is
that the best way, or is it
metering it and not having
to have a person there which
would take away the expense
of a person to collect the
money.

>> Tovo: So it sounds
like, and again I'll submit
a question and get a sense
what that has generated in
terms of funds, but there
was also a conversation we
had about whether the
botanical gardens, if we
blasted on and approved the
request to charge a fee,
which we did, whether there
was an opportunity to have
one free day a month, say on
sundays, so members of the
public could come in that

day once a month for free.

The line item wasn't large,
but we didn't have the money
so we didn't adopt that
provision, but I know that
you had expressed a
commitment to making sure to
look fundraising
opportunities and wondered
if you had success.

>> We actually have.

It's not in the way of
fundraising dollars, but
when things are televised
and we had the company tbg
contact us and they are
doing free work for us as
far as sort of master
planning the area, working
with the board, which they

were very excited about
because this -- it's much
needed to look at some areas
that we need to renovate.

So they have offered
services at no cost to help

[10:36:00]

us look at some of the
priority areas we need to
take care of first and they
are working with staff and
the board to prioritize
those and come up with a
plan.

That would have cost us, i
don't know, in the thousands
of dollars that we're not

having to pay for.

And then we sat down -- i
sat down with them and
kimberly McNealy on two
occasions to talk about
setting up a strategic plan
and then looking for donors
or groups to help us move
this forward.

So we have done these things
and we haven't finished it,
but these are some of the
things we're working on so
the board can actively go
out and pursue some dollars
to be able to make
improvements and -- and
offer better programs.

The other thing we have been
able to do is we're working

very closely with watershed protection and the possibility of bringing over the assets they have and working to set up actual live projects that would stay on site for long periods of time.

For instance, rain water collection.

People don't know how to do that.

You can buy the barrel but they are not sure how to set things up.

We're working closely with watershed protection for examples of things you can do at your own house, no

cost, how we do stream bank
restoration and other things
for educational purposes.

Donna is also now on
television on ynn doing
some -- going out and
visiting people's houses
that have drought resistant,
drought tolerant planting
and now people are seeing
that.

Then we have other ideas of
growing our own succulents
and things that we put in
parks instead of some of the
water -- heavily used plants
that drink a lot of water.

We're doing a lot of
different things and we're
working with the board to

try to come up with sort of
a strategic plan of our
priority areas, and they
know fundraising is going to
have to be a large part of

[10:38:00]

that and the board is
willing to do that.

We're working with them on
that.

>> Tovo: That's great.

I appreciate you telling us
about all of those programs.

It sounds like a lot of
exciting initiatives

underway.

I would just say especially
if the botanical gardens is
going to serve this in a new
way, a new educational
function, I think it becomes
even more critical that
austin residents have access
to it one day a week for
free.

Especially because it is
going to educate -- educate
young people and parents
about concentration
strategies that really serve
the community's purpose i
think in allowing them to
access that.

It's one of the things that
happened last year in the

budget that made me think
because it is a change when
you have a resource like the
bow taken ial gardens that
everyone has enjoyed.

It's featured in a couple of
children's books, but one of
our residents has written
and it's just unfortunate i
think when it becomes
something people can only
access by paying.

And so I justment you to
continue as they work in all
these areas, I want you to
continue to see other
priorities allowing members
of our community to come in
at least once a month for
free so it's something
everybody in the city can

enjoy.

>> The other thing, that's why we want to relook at this because when they are involved and if we're doing programming for camps for kids, you don't want to charge somebody to come in, they've already paid for the camp.

Look at it deeper, if you are dropping someone off, you don't have to pay for parking.

Maybe the answer is the parking meters because if you are going to stay for a while you pay.

But if you are dropping off

you don't pay.

Right now you come in you
have to pay and it's a
little double dipping we
don't think is necessary.

>> Tovo: That's great.

[10:40:04]

>> Issue with one of the
senior centers, some members
of that community came
forward and said that their
programming had been
[inaudible] and we talked
about it in one of our work
sessions, it had to do with
a volunteer who was doing
the programming who had left

and I know parks department
was going to work with
health and human services to
try to rectify that
situation and get somebody
back on board who would
could programming for
members of that community
and I wanted an update on
that.

>> Carlos is here.

This was at the health and
human services site where we
were coming in and offering
services and the beloved
staff member was leaving,
which we always have a
problem with, which is a
good news, bad news.

They are a great staff

member, but when they leave,
we can't hardly fill their
shoes because they are so
popular.

Carlos.

>> Tovo: If you need to
get back to me, that's okay.

>> We'll get back, but i
know we've worked hard to
solve it and I think we
have, but this is one site
that we'll have the ongoing
problem with all of our
centers when we lose that
kind of quality staffing and
then have to replace.

This was a volunteer
actually.

>> Tovo: I was going to
say I thought it was a
volunteer and that was part
of the challenge, it was a
lot of work to ask for a
volunteers but on the other
hand you have men and women
going to that center for
years who wanted to continue
the programs.

>> We will follow up.

We worked diligently to get
this solved.

I think we've solved it --
it is solved great great
great.

Great.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: And

we are going to have a
briefing from health and
human services this morning
if we get to it.

>> Tovo: That's great.

>> So it's a paid position
now, it's a part-time paid
position, and it's being
staffed by meals on wheels,
but it's the same individual
that was responsible before.

So we have some continuity.

>> Tovo: Thank you for
following up on that.

I know that was an important

[10:42:01]

issue for many people who
had been attending there for
years.

Let's see, a couple quick
questions about just the way
the information is
presented.

Would you please explain,
and apologies if you did
this for me last year, what
is the recreational
enterprise fund and what is
contained within that and i
guess what isn't?

>> The recreational
enterprise fund used to
consist of our softball fun
and the recreational -- that

is no longer.

Everything now is in the
general fund except for the
golf enterprise fund.

>> Tovo: Okay.

So that appears on our
budget overview just because
it was around in 2009 but is
no longer.

>> That's correct, they are
just giving you a history
for the last several years.

>> Tovo: And I notice in
the summary comments you
address grants, but, you
know, while that actually
many as far as grant
programs are expected to

continue, but I thought i
saw in a lot of categories
that some of the grants were
actually going down.

Maybe it was in the budget
overview.

On the other hand, I know --
I see it in the budget
overview it looks like it's
dropped from about 474 down
to this year 377, 377,000,
and there's quite a jump
anticipated for next year.

I wondered if you could
address that.

Where are those grants
coming from?

Is that a result of the

grant writer?

I know you've hired a grant
writer in the last few

[10:44:01]

years.

>> It's been vacant for a
while because we lost our
grant writer.

But we are just getting more
keen into what grants we can
use and, quite frankly,
we're partnering with other
city departments to look at
grants that we can do
together.

And many times it may be a
small grant from us that
we're matching with another
city department.

We have the food grant that
we use with our programs
with the summer youth
program.

We're looking at some grants
through the national
integration parks
association and we're
working with some of our
friends in the community
groups, neighborhood
associations with matching
grants.

It's just coming from a
variety of areas, but we're
trying to maximize the use

of everything we can.

>> Tovo: That's terrific.

1 million

proposed grant fund, are
those grants have you been
awarded or are those grants
that have been applied for?

How southern, I guess, is
that funding in.

>> We're still in the
process of applying and
we're very hopeful, but
there's always that risk you
did not receive the grant.

But we are very aggressive
this year in going after our
grants to assist parks and
recreation.

>> Tovo:1

represents grants alied for.

>> That's correct.

One is for the texas parks
and wildlife grant for
\$500,000, the boating.

>> Tovo: and
apologies again if you've
explained this dozens of
times to my colleagues, but
can you tell me what expense
refunds mean?

>> Yes.

Expense refunds are a
combination of things.

We have agreements with

other city departments where they are or we are providing services to them and we are refunded dollars for that.

We also have a large c.i.p.

Expense refund.

We have current parks staff that works on our capital projects and they are refunded by the capital funds.

So that's the bulk of those.

[10:46:00]

>> Tovo: So that's not --
when it appears under, say,

recreational programs, those
don't count fees coming in
from participants and those
activities.

Those are strictly like
internal funds moving back
and forth?

>> That's correct.

>> Tovo: Thank you.

I wanted to ask you about
some of the performance
measures on 247,
please.

There was quite a jump in
the right direction from the
number of registered
participants in senior
programs from 8,000, which

was the anticipated, to the
116,000 estimated.

And the actual number in
2010 was 11,000.

If you go from 2010 from
1,000 up to 116,000 the
following year is a pretty
big jump and I wondered if
you could describe what kind
of -- does that represent
programs, funding, different
kinds of accounting.

It looked like a relatively
new measure, but ordinary
progress.

>> My one answer on this is
kimberly McNealy.

She has turned a corner for

us when it comes to
recreational services and
looking at based on need,
based on the areas of
highest need, based on user
satisfaction and she's gone
out and talked to every
single advisory group and
neighborhood group and asked
questions about what are
your needs, what are we
missing, what are we not
doing.

In two words, kimberly
McNEALY AND THE STAFF HAVE
Tried to turn this around
and answering needs based on
what areas have asked for.

>> Tovo: That's fabulous.

So you have increased by

almost 100,000 the number of
senior participants in
programming.

>> It's just -- community
gardens has helped because
we're getting them more

[10:48:00]

active.

Everything from youth,
preschool, all the way up,
we're starting to see a huge
interest in our programs
where we saw -- if you
remember last year, I talked
about we need to do a better
job of programming and do
quality not quantity and

that it is where we've folk
you had and that has made a
huge difference and we're
having to add more classes
because we're getting more
people want to go take these
kind of programs.

Have you noticed, since you
mentioned these programs, i
did want to talk a little
about -- you mentioned
adding new classes and
things.

In one of our work sessions
we did have a discussion
about some of the cost
containment strategies that
were reducing some of the
senior programming and youth
programming and I don't --
this kind of high level

detail doesn't necessarily
allow us to assess where
that might be happening.

>> Actually the budget
office worked with us to
sort of help true up some of
those costs and that's why
you don't see the reduction
in services, you see the
additional amount of money
that we're getting in the
history, arts and nature
area and those are the areas
we were having to make
adjustments for sort of
reductions.

We were able to sort of
level that off now.

Obviously we are going to
have to continue to look at

cost of doing service based
on the service, but it's a
lot easier to charge the
right fee when the program
is quality.

And what we were
experiencing was when we
didn't have such a high
quality, but we were not
very consistent with our
fees either.

So now we've looked at a
consistent fee schedule,
we've also looked at not
turning anyone away from
areas of need and we still
have to have the number of
limit like 50 children in a
program based on size of the
facility or the room.

But it's made a huge
difference by looking at
quality over quantity, cost
of service and then doing it
right and that's why this
trues us up, sort of gets us
where we need to be and what
does it cost to do the

[10:50:00]

service and if there's a
full-time employee already
is there th, we don't have
to duplicate the cost.

If it's temporary seasonal,
helping with camp programs,
we have to put that in
whether taking trips,
educational programs.

But I think next year will
be our better year to look
at our numbers and see what
we are, but I think what
kimberly has been able to do
with the great staff, we've
been able to look at this
across the board, make sure
we're balancing what we
offer and it's quality and
reasonable and affordable
price and no one is turned
away based on the fact they
can't afford the program.

>> Tovo: And I completely
appreciate and applaud that
approach.

That's the right place to be
in.

My concern is when we have increased the number of registered participants in senior programs by 100,000 in one year, are we increasing the funding for those programs or does that mean you have to come up with budget constraintment in other areas because I want to make sure we have that conversation.

My intent is I want to be sure we have a conversation as council if there are going to be cost containment strategies as there were last year that are going to result in program cuts in our senior programming or our youth programming.

I want to have that conversation during the budget session so we can if need be allocate more money to the budget line for that -- those interested individuals to be served adequately.

>> Yeah, at this time no, we're not looking at cost containment.

What we're doing is more creative programming because of causes.

Creating community gardens by working with our friends in other areas.

But do we always need more money, the answer is yes,

but no, we're not going
through a cost containment
exercise and start reducing
the program.

>> Tovo: Okay.

That's good to hear.

Okay.

Thanks.

And I will have some
followup questions, but that
was the main one.

I want to understand the
recreation and program
services, the community

[10:52:00]

services are divided into
categories, but the
history arts and nature
including the nature science
center, the dak, I see the
list of programs under here.

Is the recreation and
program services strictly
camp, and if there's a
camp -- I mean it's the
center city.

If there's a camp at the
nature and science center,
does it appear in recreation
and program services or
history arts and major?

>> If it's the camp at the
rec center, it will appear

in the recreation services
slide.

If there's camps at the
museum, that would be --

>> Tovo: In the museum
side.

And the same with senior
classes.

If they are senior classes
at the dek, they are on the
arts, history and culture
side.

Thanks very much.

I really appreciate your
work.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:

Before you leave, I have
just a couple of comments.

First of all, I think we --
and other councilmembers
have made these comments, we
have to make better use of
pickup private partnership
otherwise we're not going to
fund and maintain our parks
so I just encourage to you
continue along those lines.

Even, you know, increasing
use adopt a park program,
especially for people who
live in those areas be given
the opportunity to help
maintain their neighborhood
parks.

But also agreements with
nonprofits.

And another quick item,
don't necessarily want to
comment on it, but the
problem with macc parking
continues to be a problem,
and the whole idea is that
the macc facility would have
preferential parking for
their events there.

There's a lot of people that
live in the neighborhood
here, a lot of new
commercial ventures,
especially barks and because
they are in the cbd they are
not required to have

[10:54:01]

parking.

We need to look at
innovative ways to
accomplish that goal of
making sure there's adequate
parking for their event.

One might be the charge for
parking.

Set up a gate there at the
entrance, people who come
there for macc events, of
course, could be much like
we are here at city hall.

Have you legitimate business
there at that facility, you
could get your card stamped
and not have to pay the fee.

Just encourage you to

continue those discussions
and try to alleviate that
problem.

And my final question is
what is the status of the
george versus joseph bonnell
situation?

[Laughter]
you don't have to elaborate.

>> Mayor, it's -- it is not
accepted by the historic
commission, we've made every
attempt to try to say that
we were willing to look at
this, and I'll be honest i
read the packet of materials
and there's a good case for
it, but our commission is --
is not seeing that and not
willing to --

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Is

that the texas historic --

>> that one, yes, primarily

that one.

And so we'll continue to be

supportive and like I said

I've read the packet and

there's a lot of points

there that certainly

indicate there's a wrong

naming.

But it's out of our hands.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: So

we'll leave it to the texas

historic commission to make

that decision?

>> Well, at this point we've

left it in their hands
because our own historic
commission is also in
agreement with that.

The one that we worked with
on.

But I think those two
commissions are not willing
to take it any further and
it would have to be
something that if the
council wanted to address
this and it could be done
and we have a packet of
information that say it's
the wrong -- wrong person.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Got
the wrong bonnell.

>> Yes.

[10:56:00]

>> Mayor Leffingwell: It
kind of sound that way to me
and I know there are a lot
of people that feel very
passionately about historic
accuracy on that issue.

And just as a parting
comment, mount bonnell park
is another one of those
parks that frequently used
by folks, I don't know if
they are paying fees or not,
but workout groups,
especially on the weekends
and mornings and even
religious services are
conducted there.

>> Yes.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I
think we need to take a look
at that.

Thank you.

>> Tovo: Mayor, one last
comment.

I was asking so many
questions about the budget,
I forgot to offer what I
wanted to say which was just
what a terrific job I think
you are doing in terms of
youth programs and what a
great reputation they have
in the community.

My colleagues may not know

but some of the summer camp programs especially people wait in line for a couple hours to register for, my husband did that for me this year and my girls had a great experience and that was what I heard from parents all over the community about the arts program and the nature and science programs and some of the other programs that are offered to youth in our community.

So I just want to commend you and your staff for doing such fine work at all of our facilities.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: The guy in the parks and

recreation department is
rated number one in citizen
satisfaction, so that's an
accomplishment.

Councilmember morrison.

>> Morrison: These
questions brought up two
quick items.

We had a great discussion
with sara at audit and
finance when we were talking
about the cemeteries and
maintenance and upkeep, and
you mentioned hand-held
technology there and we
talked about you mentioned
it here in terms of that's
going to improve the
efficiency of our
maintenance work.

One of the things we heard
in that discussion in audit
and finance was the budget
needed for those hand-held
devices is relatively small.

Sit about 10,000?

It's about \$10,000.

[10:58:02]

Ctm has a plan for funding
each of the departments, but
the parks funding is a
little bit on down the line
and I wanted to ask if there
is a way that our city
manager could look into
potentially shifting that

because 10,000, that
sequence, and include the
parks hand-held devices
earlier in the process
rather than later since it
is going to be such a key
and we are needing to do
everything that we can so
adjusting it \$10,000
somewhere along the lines, i
would appreciate it if you
could take a look at that.

And secondly you mentioned
the holistic approach that's
being taken for parking at
the macc, boat house, rainy
street area, and I wanted to
highlight we have an item on
our agenda this thursday
that is related to that and
that is we're -- there's an
item to approve the sale of

a city piece of property on
rainey street and as part of
that sale they were going to
be required to maintain 30
parking spaces.

And I guess I just wanted to
know are we sure it's an all
be parking or if we're doing
a holistic approach, how do
we know that's the right
step to take now?

[One moment, please, for
change in captioners]

>> it will be parking that
is set aside for that
purpose for city use, for
city use.

>> Morrison: But if you're
going down to rainey street

and you're not going to one of those, then you won't be allowed to use that parking.

>> No.

Part of this deal is they will be managing the parking, so those spots will be for city use.

>> Morrison: Okay.

Thank you.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:

Okay.

Next we'll go to library.

And before we begin, we're scheduled to end this at 12.

I have to leave a little bit
before that.

Some idea of availability of
councilmembers?

That will put us down to
four numbers.

Okay.

So again with q and a on the
library budget.

I don't see necessity any questions?

Councilmember morrison?

>> Morrison: I do have one
question.

Just breezing through here,
one of the items you talked

about was the materials
budget.

It looks like we're going to
have a nice hefty materials
budget.

And then also a dedicated
fund for temporary
employees.

Could you talk a little bit
about that?

Because that's one of the
issues that came up last
year.

It looks like only
yesterday.

And that was we had some
materials funding, but then

we found that because of the
need for the temporary
employees some of that
materials funding was
getting shifted and there
was some concern about are
we not doing what we need to
do for materials.

I wonder if you could talk
about that.

>> [Inaudible - no mic].

... With materials money.

We didn't necessarily spend
it.

We held it so that we
wouldn't go over our budget.

And we were able in the past

not to spend materials
budget.

And this year with the
addition of these five
temperatures we will not
have -- five temps we will
not have to hold materials
budget at all.

>> Morrison: Okay.

I guess that brings a
question up for me.

We budget for materials
spending because we know
that we're allow -- we're
low on it which is reflected
in the intention, so what
does that mean for the
materials budget and have we
been able to make up that

impact that we lost?

>> What we've done in the past is we've -- we typically have 20 to 30 temporaries that we need to keep the central library operating.

We held out in the past over 200,000.

Last year we held up to 500,000.

But we let temporaries go towards the middle of the year so that we wouldn't end up impacting our materials budget.

And then at the end of the year we released the budget,

the materials budget, so
that we could spend it all
by the end of the year.

>> Morrison: I see.

So all the money that was
budgeted got spent.

>> Yes.

>> Morrison: But I guess
what I hear you saying now
is that we know we're going
to need temporary employees.

That's just part of running
the library.

So that's why it's going to
be separated out and then it
will be carved out and we
won't have to do the

shifting.

>> Exactly.

>> Morrison: Great.

Thank you.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:
Councilmember Riley.

>> Riley: I have a related
question.

I very much appreciate the
foresight going into the
planning for shift to the
new central library.

And I appreciate you're
including a page on the
presentation and about the
funding over the next four

years to get ready for the
new central library.

Four million dollars is new
capital funding for the new
central library.

And this year alone we're
2 million
towards the materials
collection of the new
central library.

But I wanted to ask about --
about an indirectly related
subject, which is as we move
those materials over to the
new central library, at some
point around 2016 we're
going to find that we have
an empty building there,
what is now the faulk
central library and the

history center has long
hoped to expand into the
faulk building.

But that going to take some
work.

Of course, the faulk
building is really not
suitable for an archive al
facility in its current
state.

Is there anything that we're
doing over the budgets in
the next few years, in the
intervening years between
now and 2016, to help us get
ready for those changes that
will be necessary or are we
looking at a couple of years
when that's just going to be
an empty building and we

have to look at a future bond item in order to have the funding available to upgrade that building to be able to house an extension of the history center.

>> Once that building is vacated once we move over to the new central library, our internal facilities services department will do very basic modifications to the building so that it can accommodate the move of the history center over to the current John Henry Faulk building.

We will need a bond package, however, to fully renovate that building so that it can accommodate the archival

materials and so on.

>> Riley: So you expect that we will be able to make some temporary use of the facility in its current state, just to try to clear out the hallways in the current history center building.

And then-- there will be a couple of years of interim temporary use of the facility and then we'll -- and then at that time we'll do additional planning work to be able to go forward with the bond to be able to do the necessary overhaul of the building.

>> That's correct.

>> Riley: Got it.

Thanks.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:

Okay.

Thank you very much.

Health and human services
will be next.

And the last department
we'll hear from today is
planning, development and
review.

Questions on health and
human services?

Councilmember riley.

>> Riley: I wanted to ask
about a few things.

First, the african-american
youth resource center.

We've been working on a
council resolution, as
councilmember martinez
mentioned, we've been
working with the resource
center -- we've been working
with the youth -- yes,
that's right.

We've been working on an
item on the agenda to find
funding for the
african-american resource
center.

And I think it asks staff to
see what you can do to find

that fund.

And I realize that's not an easy task, but I wanted to see if you had any initial thoughts on the prospects for being able to identify some funding for that -- the african-american youth resource center.

They're asking specifically for an additional \$102,000 to support their work there.

Is there anything that you could -- any preliminary thoughts on where we might be on being able to identify that additional funding.

>> What we'll do is work with the budget office and

try to see what possible
sources of funding we can
recommend for that.

I know the department will
have to do that and we'll
certainly be happy to see
what we can come up with.

>> Riley: Great.

Another --

>> Martinez: Can I ask one
follow-up at this point.

Burt, do we take a look at
opportunities for
organizations like the
african-american resource
center to assist them in
applying for grants that
they may be missing because

they don't have the
personnel and folks
available to draft those
grants and make those
applications?

>> Carlos rivera, director
of health and human
services.

Yes, we take every
opportunity to invite folks
to talk to us about grant
opportunities.

But we haven't had anything
official from them yet, but
we've been talking about the
partnerships extensively.

>> Martinez: So as part of
this item, it may not
explicitly be drafted into

the item, but I certainly hope that we keep that as an option where we can connect them with funding sources that they may not be aware of.

>> Yes.

>> Martinez: Thanks.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:
Councilmember Riley.

>> Riley: Another issue that we've been looking at and getting community input on relates to funding for early childhood and youth services.

With respect to early childhood programs, we know

that there have been some changes as a result of the funding process that we went through.

When we took a look at all of our social service contracts and came one a funding matrix to overhaul our mechanism for funding those services, the results were some changes that may not have been intended.

And in particular with respect to youth services in the year -- in 2012 we're seeing a drop of some \$500,000.

In early childhood programs.

And that items expected to

fall another -- almost
another half million in
2013.

So some very significant
cuts.

There's also been some
concerns about youth
programs and in particular
programs like the council on
at risk youth, which do very
valuable work.

And in both cases with
respect to both early
childhood and these youth
programs, the argument is
that investments at an early
stage will actually save
money down the road as well
as improving the lives of
all the many individuals

that are affected by this
funding and the matrix that
we came up with for scoring
the social services program
just didn't do a very good
job of recognizing the need
for funding at the earlier
stages of life.

So with all that in mind,
can you give us any insight
as to the prospects for
being able to identify some
additional funding to
support either the early
childhood or youth programs
that we've talked about?

>> Well, we're in a tough
position over the short run.

Department doesn't really
have any discretionary

funding for -- to fund folks
with, but we're already
beginning to look at the
,
which is two years away,
which is right around the
corner, and we want to
develop a strategic focus
for you, based on the life
continuum, the life-span as
opposed to like basic needs.

So it would take into
account the needs of early
learning and also adolescent
development and prenatal,
preconception care.

It is unfortunate and a
little bit disheartening
that what occurred occurred.

I know it wasn't intended

but we did divest in early
learning by about 50%.

>> Clearly we've got a lot
of work to do.

As carlos mentioned the
continuum will be very
what we would
intend to do from here to
the next budget is one of
the first initiatives, which
is the city council
resolution that you've
already adopted, has to do
with the youth submit, and
that's really take advantage
of the organizations and the
folks that are out there
doing some good work along
with the work that we
already have been doing
internally in terms of

inventorying all of our city
youth programs, but even
seeing where we may have
overlaps and gaps.

And so the whole idea that
is with the youth summit and
then moving forward is to
come back to city council
and with a whole lot more
strategic focus saying these
are the programs that we're
funding, these are the
programs that are out there
in the community as much as
possible, gather what i
would consider as much of a
comprehensive set of
information that we can and
then come to you with
specific recommendations on
where are the needs.

Is it in the zero to three,
is it in the 12 to 10, is it
in ain't to 22?

Whatever the -- the 18 to
22?

Whatever the continuum
indicates where we have the
greatest need.

Obviously early childhood is
probably going to fall in
there, but it really would
examine what's out there,
what is really needed, and
then come to you with a
whole lot more strategic set
of recommendations in terms
of what we're currently
doing, but also what we
prospectively should be
doing as well.

>> And I would add that we
need to look beyond the
absolute needs and look at
opportunities for success.

There are many needs and we
don't have the resources to
make them all, but there are
also some rock solid
opportunities for success
again like in early
learning, which depends on
which statistic you look
like you get like a five to
one return on your
investment.

So we do need to really take
a close look at what's
achievable over the short
run and the long run.

>> Riley: Agreed.

And burt, with respect to
the strategic prioritization
that you're describing,
what's the timing on that?

When might we see some
recommendations?

>> Our goal is once we
complete the work with the
youth submit, what we would
gear up to do is going to
come back in plenty of time
before the next budget which
would be next fiscal year.

So that's what our timeline
would be.

>> Riley: So that would be
helpful for next year.

We may still have an issue
for next year.

And it sounds like if we
want to make some changes to
be effective this year,
we're going to need to find
that funding somewhere
outside the current budget?

>> That's correct.

And our thought with that,
councilmember, is is just
that it would help council
be a whole lot more
strategic in terms of where
the greatest needs are,
obviously understanding sort
of like what we ran across
with social services that
there will be a lot of

needs, but where do you
start first and where do you
make the best investment
that you possibly can.

>> Riley: Okay.

The last thing I wanted to
ask about is a couple of
recommendations that we got
from the sustainable food
policy board.

They have suggested that we
consider an outreach in
marketing program for
increasing snap enrollment
and it also suggests
matching dollars for farmers
market and snap.

Have y'all had a chance to
look at those

recommendations?

>> We're very familiar with
the recommendations.

We have a matching program
that i
believe the -- we have to
work a little harder to make
sure that folks are using
those coupons.

We do need to have more
availability of farmers
markets, just more place for
our folks to go to make it
more accessible to them.

But we have been taking
these things into
consideration.

And just benefits in

general, through our neighborhood centers we're making sure that folks are applying for things that they are eligible for.

We're trying to expand our ability to do that as within additional service.

>> Riley: Great.

I'll look forward to continued work on that.

Thanks for all you're doing.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Just to follow up a little bit, as you come up with next year's consume for grant funding, I would encourage you to get out there as soon

as possible and do a lot of outreach and work with the organizations that receive grant funding.

I know it's always worst to have a big surprise at the end than it is to have worked with these folks all along so they can do their planning.

They can do their planning for private fund-raising and other grants that they might receive from sources other than the city of austin.

And the united way as we all know has made changed a significant way in the way they put out their grant funding and I think that

will change the way we do
ours.

That has to be incorporated
and may very well have an
effect this year.

There may be changes that
would be necessary as there
were a couple of years ago
when united way changed
their grant funds.

So with that in mind -- just
a quick question.

There's been a lot of
discussion lately about the
15 waiver, but all that
discussion has had to do
with central health and how
these waivers would benefit
them.

In using local dollars to attract many more federal dollars.

46 in their case.

How does this affect health and human services?

>> There's five percent of the overall pot of the \$1,115 are available to health departments in our region.

So essentially our region is ourselves and hays, hays county.

So we have an opportunity to capture those dollars.

The difficulty for us is
that we need to have money
up front in order to
initiate new programming.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: You
have to spend money to get
more money.

>> Right.

And right now we have four
major programs that are --
comprise our wish list, but
only one of them is funded.

And that's permanent
supportive housing where we
have \$100,000.

I mean, the key is that it
has to be new, new

programming.

So old programming wouldn't
be eligible.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:

Would the new funding,
assuming that the bond
propositions pass in
november, there's money in
there for affordable housing
and certainly a part of that
is permanent supportive
housing, I hope a very large
part, would that go towards
helping secure 1115 waiver
money?

>> It has to be for
services.

It can't be for capital.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:

Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: Thank you.

Just a couple of quick
questions.

First of all, I wanted to
thank you for your comments,
lumbreras, about the
youth summit, because it
will help, especially as we
get individual requests for
funding.

And I know we all hear -- i
think it will help us as a
council evaluate just the
range of organizations out
there who may need some
additional support from the
city, and that will allow us

I think to make good decisions about where the highest critical needs are.

As you said, there is not a lot of discretionary money available, so I think it's very important if we're directing staff to look at identifying funding for particular organizations or do that in the context of the range of needs that are out there and the city identified priorities.

So I'm very excited about the youth summit because I think it will allow to us do work with our community stake holders who are also inventorying the range of needs and resources out

there.

So thank you for your work
on that.

A couple of quick questions
about the sustainability
fund.

First an easy one about
vending machines.

The department is
eliminating its permitting
fee for vending machines.

What does that mean?

What kind of vending
machines?

>> Sherri lane, health and
human services financial

services.

Historically we've had vendors come and request permits to have vending machines in their facilities.

And over the last several years we have not had any requests from those vendors, so we eliminated that fee because we haven't had any requests.

>> Tovo: Are these vending machines with snacks and drinks?

>> Snacks and drinks, yes.

>> Mayor Leffingwell:
Cokes and snickers.

>> Not in health and human services.

There are some cokes, but we are making our choices much health yardangs thanks to wong -- healthier thanks to dr. wong.

>> Tovo: That's one of the reasons it caught my eye.

So in other words, in the neighborhood centers there have been vending machines and permits.

I don't understand the contracts.

>> They're not city vends machine, they're from

outside vendors.

And what we can do is I can
get a list of the types of
vendors who are coming in
requesting it.

I don't have the information
with me, but we can get a
list of who has historically
requested these permits.

>> Tovo: I guess I was
really trying to find out
where they're requesting
permits to locate those.

Where are they trying to put
those -- when they are
requesting a permit, where
are they trying to locate
those vending machines?

>> I can get that to you.

I'm not very sure.

>> Tovo: Okay.

And so the rationale here is
that those vendors are no
longer interested in having
vending machines?

>> Right.

We have not had -- correct.

We have not had revenue in
that line item for the last
few years.

So we are asking to reduce
that or eliminate that.

>> Tovo: I see.

Do you think that has some
relationship to the
healthier snacks?

>> Possible.

>> Tovo: But I fully
support the emphasis on
healthier snacks.

>> We're doing well in that
category.

>> Tovo: Okay.

And with regard to the
sustainability fee, I see a
few things that are proposed
to be shifted -- the
sustainability fund.

And I wanted to talk about

the one identified a 181
first.

Five employees are being
transferred to the block
grant from the -- and these
had previously been funded
by the sustainability fund.

Do you have a sense of what
might have been funded
through the block grant that
will now not be able to be
funded by that block grant
because of this transfer?

>> At the beginning of last
fiscal year the grant had
been cut by 50%, which made
it necessary for us to have
some sustainability funds in
order to keep the folks
employed and have the

resources available.

Then the state has fully
funded us this year.

And moving forward, as a
10-year situation, we don't
know what next year's
funding will be, but we're
fully funded for the
upcoming year.

>> Tovo: Did you say
10-year situation or
tenuous?

>> Tenuous.

>> Tovo: I was hoping you
said 10-year.

>> That would be great.

>> Tovo: That's just a matter of this transfers just because you won't need to use the sustainability fund to fund those because they can be funded through the block grant and they have been funded in the past by the block grant.

>> Yes.

>> Tovo: Thanks for that clarification.

And on 182 I see the social service contract, funding for contracts with agencies providing basic needs and homeless services and for the african-american youth resource center will come from the general fund rather

than the sustainability
fund.

I know one of my colleagues
raised a question about that
earlier about funding for
the youth resource center,
but it looks like it's
contemplated within this
budget already.

Is that just an ongoing --
is that part of the ongoing
commitment?

>> Yes.

That was funding that was
given to the youth resource
center last year.

They received some contract
dollars that will go through

fiscal year '13 and so that
is the -- historically in
the last few years it was
funded through the
sustainability fund and for
'13 it was transferred into
the general fund.

>> Tovo: So we had a
little discussion about this
in one of our budget work
sessions about the
sustainability fund.

And I think staff are going
to get back to us on some of
the history of the fund and
its mission and purpose as
we talk about some of these
transfers that are being
made from sustainability
fund dollars back to
departmental budgets.

But I wondered if you could give me a sense of whether that had -- whether this transfer had impacted any of your other programs because obviously it's -- I guess it should be a question for what else in the general fund may not be able to be funded this year if this transfer happens from the sustainability fund.

>> The transfer doesn't affect our ability to continue our current level of programming.

It is just a transfer from the dollars that were in the sustainability fund were transferred into the general

fund to continue those same
programming.

So it won't affect any of
fiscal year 2013.

>> I think that one is
posted.

Has it not been posted yet?

>> Not as of the last
printout that I got.

It's number 17.

>> I've seen a draft of it.

It will be posted very soon.

We'll get that posted
certainly this week.

And just following up on
what Carrie was saying,
really what we're doing here
is looking at what was the
most appropriate source for
these basic needs services,
homeless services, youth
services that has
historically been funded out
of this sustainability fund,
ostensibly being funded by
the enterprise operations.

And we've had the discussion
of when we were looking at
that that we felt the more
appropriate funding source
was the general fund.

So with the fiscal year '13
budget before you, you're
starting to see more of
those services funded out of

the general fund as opposed to the sustainability fund, and that would be the direction and that would be staff's intent to continue in that direction over the next few budget cycle.

But there's no reductions happening here, it's just a matter of are those dollars in the general fund or are they in the sustainability fund.

So the general fund is a bigger budget than it would have otherwise been by about 3 million and the sustainability fund is a smaller budget than it otherwise would have been by \$1.3 million.

But we're not changing the
services we're providing,
just changing the source.

>> Tovo: Okay.

Thanks.

>>

>> Mayor Leffingwell:
Councilmember morrison.

>> Morrison: So I'm still
struggling to try and make
sure I understand that whole
issue with the
sustainability fund.

But really I wonder if you
could go back to slide
number 25, which is along

with 26 talking about
significant changes in the
budget.

And it says -- I'm not sure
4 million refers
to.

Could you just give me an
overview of this and the
next slide and what they're
saying?

>> Sure.

So when we look at the
significant changes of the
department, we go through
and look at all the
increases and decreases that
will happen in fiscal year
'13.

So the first 521,000 are the market increases, the wage adjustments, the health insurance increases for the departments.

And then when we go down further into the departmental changes --

>> Morrison: You don't have to walk through each one of them.

I just wanted the big picture.

So here on this page we have some chunk of change that is an increasing cost to running the department.

>> Correct.

>> Morrison: Including
5 million in what
used to be sustainability,
coming out of the
sustainability fund.

>> Correct.

>> Morrison: So did the
departmental budget go
bye-bye \$4.4 million?

>> No.

It was a net decrease of
4 million --

>> Morrison: Is that what
that means?

Significant change means
it's decreased by 4.4.

>> Correct.

And included in that is the
change of animal services
into their own office.

>> Morrison: You have
something to say?

>> No.

It's a decrease because of
the animal services, about
seven and a half million
dollars used to be included
in the health unlet budget
and now it's its own budget
item.

So there's a reduction in
health and human services,
but it's not really a

reduction.

It's now within two pots.

>> Morrison: Okay.

That's what the next slide
shows.

>> Correct.

>> Morrison: Okay.

So I guess -- I want to make
sure I have the
sustainability fund.

3 million that
was coming from
sustainability is now
going -- instead of into the
sustainability fund it's
going into the general fund

and then into health and
human services?

Or is the general fund not
being bumped up by that
amount of money?

>> No.

The general fund is being
bumped up by \$1.3 million.

The sustainability fund is
smaller by that amount and
therefore the amount of
money that the enterprise
operations are contributing
to the sustainability fund
is lower.

So in particular this year
the drainage fund has
historically contributed

around 6 or \$700,000 a year
to the fund.

>> Morrison: To which
fund?

>> To the sustainability
fund.

>> Morrison: Is that now
going -- part of it, is it
now going to the general
fund?

>> No.

That transfer to the
sustainability fund goes
away.

So the drainage fund
transfers to the
sustainability fund.

It just allows them to take
that money and now direct it
towards drainage projects or
other needs that that
department has or to help
keep the drainage fee lower
than it otherwise would be.

Ditto for the water utility.

They used to contribute
about five million, four and
a half, five million
dollars.

And this amount is a little
lower now, about five or six
hundred thousand dollars
lower, which begin gives the
water utility those
resources to allocate other
projects or needs that they

have, but the funding now is
in the general fund.

Those programs are now in
the general fund so the
general fund, the amount of
money we need to make the
general fund balance is
higher than it otherwise
would be.

>> Morrison: Precisely.

I think that's the key point
that is really a significant
policy issue that we need to
be thinking about as a
council.

And that's why it's so
important to me to be able
to get that context of how
the sustainability fund was

created and why.

And why it was created in
the first place.

Because the bottom line is
we have the enterprise fund
specifically designating
some of their monies, a
small portion of their
monies to support the
priorities which I assume
were council priorities
associated with the -- what
goes into the sustainability
fund.

And so now with this shift
away from that, we need to
realize that there's less
money -- what would be -- i
don't know quite how to say
it, but the general fund

dollars has to go farther.

The general fund dollars
have to go farther and we no
longer have this designated
fund to address
sustainability issues that
was funded by the enterprise
fund.

So I really -- for me that's
of grave concern.

And let me say also I think
that what you were saying,
rivera, about the 1115
waiver that they need to be
new year's eve programs,
that we need to find new
money for them.

That means that every dollar
that we can't find to put

into a new program leaves
\$1.43 on the table.

And I think that especially,
especially in this time when
we are working with in the
really fabulous way with all
the other entities around
our region to maximize our
\$1,115 that I think we need
to seriously think about
maintaining some of that
stability fund and maybe
even think specifically -- i
know you guys did a terrific
job of putting together
potential programs that
could go with the 1115
waiver.

Did you pass that out just
to the health and human
services committee or was

that to all councilmembers?

>> I think it went to all
councilmembers.

I'm pretty sure it did.

>> Morrison: Okay.

Because I think that health
and human services did a
fabulous job of looking at
that, but the bottom line
is we're leaving some -- the
bottom line is we're leaving
some monies on the table,
dropping that one, which are
a very small shift from our
enterprise funds to invest
in sustainability.

And that means that there
are dollars we're -- federal

dollars we're leaving on the table.

>> If I might, I certainly agree there were some very large policy issues raised in regard to this issue.

And I think from an historical standpoint the fund was created at the same time when the general fund simply couldn't sustain a level of investment in programs that at times in the past that the council was interested in.

More recently you all have had some conversations and discussions about the various things that get supported by allocation of

dollars from our enterprise operation and some of that is the desire to wean ourselves off of that because it didn't seem appropriate for some of our enterprise operations to be funding some of the things that they are.

And in the course of that discourse one of the things that we said is that it's -- in terms of resolving that, our approach would be more incremental because the general fund couldn't withstand wholesale transfer of things that even are more appropriately funded within the general fund because of the cost associated with that and had been built up

over time.

As ed said in some of these earlier remarks, this is at least an attempt to begin to recognize those programs and services that we believe.

And in right light of your more recent conversations, more commonly by the general fund.

That doesn't diminish the significance of having the larger overarching policy discussion because I think there are some conflicting things going on as well.

So I think to have that kind of discussion and get some clarity will help to guide

us in regard to whatever
your priorities are going to
be.

>> Morrison: I appreciate
that.

And I know when we were
talking about austin energy
and their transfer at this
point we've made a pretty
significant change in the
way we're structuring that.

I didn't realize that we
were talking about -- and
maybe I just am forgetting,
all enterprise funds --

>> even when that was
created, at the time they
contemplated austin energy
participating in that, but

there were reasons why and
decisions made that it
wasn't appropriate, as i
recollect, for austin energy
to participate.

So it was a discussion many
years ago and it's relevant
today.

The circumstances of course
are a little bit different,
but nevertheless a policy
dialogue to have, I think.

>> Morrison: And I think
once we get some of the
background material through
that question, and maybe we
already do have it and i
have an outdated list.

>> It is council budget

question 17 and it was
posted.

>> Morrison: Thank you.

I hope we'll be able to have
that question sooner rather
than later as part of this
budget discussion because
there are some -- because it
is moving.

Great, great.

I appreciate that.

Let's see.

I have a couple of other
questions.

One is that I appreciate the
update on the thoughts going

into the social service
contracting take 2.

Because that was a really
hard process.

And you're talking about
using sort of a life cycle
continuum as a way to look
at things.

We had struggled quite a
bit, councilmember martinez,
I know will remember this,
in terms of getting our
footing and what kind of
spectrum do we want to use
and it was the
prioritization and the
scoring and certainly early
childhood education was
included under one of the
priorities that we had.

But what I want to suggest
is that we not -- that we
actually think about the
possibility of layering
these two spectrums.

I've seen some really
wonderful, and I'm sure you
have too, life cycle sort of
spectrums laid out of
infancy and all that kind of
stuff.

And then it becomes a
matrix.

And you talk about basic
needs and prevention and
transition out of poverty
and all of that because i
think that we don't want to
swing too far in one

direction.

>> And that's exactly what
it would look like.

We're going to again
reduce -- it's all
conceptual right now, but
five major categories or
subcategories out of that.

>> Morrison: Great, great.

Let's see -- can you give us
any hard dates on when we
and on owe we as a council,
we as a subcommittee, public
health and human services
subcommittee with a
community, I know you're
already working with I think
one voice who had some
really important input, when

we might start seeing
certain steps along the way
of this process.

>> And I'm meeting with my
executive leadership team
today to start putting some
substance to the framework.

I would think three months
probably, maybe a little
sooner than that.

Again, we have a tight
timeline, two years left
is
awarded.

So we want to be in a
position to have enough lead
time in order to have folks
or the concept fully vetted.

>> Morrison: And

lumberas, I know you
mentioned with the youth
summit one of the things
we'll be looking at is where
the gaps and overlaps are to
figure out where to spend
our money.

And frankly overall we need
to be doing that, especially
as the mayor mentioned, with
other major funders shifting
their focus and having to
sort of divest from various
areas.

Really challenging, but
we'll do better this time.

>> We will.

>> Morrison: Okay.

And then just a last point,
and that is you mentioned in
terms of trying to make sure
that we maximize sign-up for
folks that are eligible for
programs and in our
neighborhood centers we're
doing that, there is a
program I think that you all
have gotten engaged with,
and that is the benefit bank
of texas.

And is that what you're
talking about in terms of
getting those into the
different neighborhood
centers?

>> Yeah.

There's two separate

efforts, the benefit bank
we'll have that effort at
every one of our
neighborhood centers and
partnership with central
health.

And then the united way is
also -- they're also
piloting benefits bank type
of -- a matching process
where they can make sure
that folks -- when they call
211 also have access to that
information.

So we're going to partner
with them on that also.

>> Morrison: And i
understand there is a fee,
but a very minimal fee to be
able to have -- to be a

benefits bank local.

Do we have funding for that?

>> It's a thousand dollars
for our five locations, so
yes.

>> Morrison: Great.

I'm glad to hear that.

Thanks for your great work.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I
just want to follow up on a
couple of things and then i
have to leave.

But first of all, on the
contracts.

My memory is that a couple

of years ago the policy
decision was made to shift
the emphasis to basic needs.

And that was primarily in
response to what other
grantors were doing, that
they were shifting their
funding away from basic
needs.

And there was one year when
we actually had to step in
midyear and give additional
money to my recollection is
the salvation army because
they had been cut out
entirely.

So I just want to
reemphasize that is my
understanding of the policy
that this council has agreed

to, that the priority in grant funding would be basic needs.

And the second comment i want to make with regard to sustainability is this grew out of the somewhat lengthy discussions with regard to austin energy in the earlier part of this year that austin energy had been disproportionately funding sustainability.

And a decision was made to go back and take a look, and spread that out in an equitable way pro rata among the various enterprises and the general fund departments that were appropriate for that.

So just to clarify that's my understanding of the policy that the city council adopted recently with regard to funding sustainability items, that part of that would come now under the general fund.

So with that, I have to leave.

I'm going to turn the chair over to councilmember martinez.

>> Tovo: Councilmember martinez, can I ask a follow-up comment about that?

Thanks.

So you know, I'm looking
over the budget response,
but I guess I want to be
clear on this.

I don't remember as part of
our austin energy work
session adopting a policy
related to changing the
focus of the sustainability
fund.

I'm looking in particular at
the q and a, and it says the
fund was established by
council in the 2000-2001
budget cycle as a mechanism
for enterprise operations to
invest in the community by
funding initiatives.

I'm exerting.

For more sustainability
economic and environmental,
equitability infrastructure.

And skipping down it says in
order to address equity in
the economy in fiscal year
2010-2011 it was recommended
that the finance workforce
initiatives and a child care
housing initiative.

I haven't had a chance to
delve into it because I'm
looking at it for the first
time now.

But there has not been --
one, it was recommended by
council or do you have a
sense of how that got
expanded to include those

additional areas in
2010-2011?

>> It was part of staff's
recommendation to count that
they approved.

>> Tovo: So it wasn't a
council decision to expand
that, the focus of the
sustainability fund, it was
a staff decision as part of
the budget process that was
then approved by council?

>> Right.

And you will recall that --
you might not recall, but
that was a very difficult
budget year, so it was one
of the mechanisms at our
disposal in order to try to

maintain those critical services, but take some of the pressure off the general fund, which was out of balance at the time.

>> Tovo: Got it.

Thank you.

So just to get back to the discussion we've been having, I think if we are shifting from workforce development, affordable housing, narrowing the focus back to environmental, some of the other issues, then I absolutely agree with councilmember morrison that's a policy discussion that we need to have.

And it's not one I believe
we had during the austin
energy rate case.

While we did certainly talk
about the transfer and some
of the other issues
associated with that, which
are similar and we talked
about the sustainability
fund as part of that, i
think we need a more focused
discussion on this issue.

>> Martinez: All right.

Any other questions?

Thanks, guys.

The last department we'll
try to get through before
noon if we can is the

planning and department
review department.

Welcome mr. guernsey.

>> Good morning.

>> Riley: I want to start
with the best slide that
shows the performance
measures for your
department.

And it looks like we're
seeing some very encouraging
projections for the coming
year.

I just wanted to ask you
comment on that.

And that of course is a
result of the adjustment

that we made recently to increase -- to bring our fees more in line with our peer cities and be able to staff the department and have timely views so we'll be back up to 90% of the initial commercial building plan reviews within the code mandated time of 21 days.

And then getting up to 95% of the inspections performed within 20 hours of the request so it looks very encouraging.

Is there anything that you want to add with respect to the progress we're making in the wake of the adjustments that were made recently with respect to the fees and

staffing?

>> Thank you, councilmember.

I appreciate the midyear
adjustment in june that you
had to add those -- the
positions not only in my
department, but also to the
fire department.

And that is correct.

We did raise the initial
goal for building plan
reviews within the code
mandated time, 21 days back
up to 90, with the
additional staff it's
anticipated that our
department and the fire
department will train these
folks and will work over the

course of this coming year
to actually get that closer
to 90.

The inspectors, we had three
inspectors as well.

And we're going to try to
maintain the level of
getting those inspections
done the next day at 95%.

>> Riley: Great.

I notice at least on the
first goal that adopted the
commercial building plan
reviews that that's higher
than any time since '06.

We're actually going to be
doing better than any time
in the projected time frame.

If we went back and looked further, would we see any time that we were actually doing better?

I guess one might ask since the land development code mandates a time of 21 days, shouldn't our goal be to hit 100%?

Have we ever been higher?

>> We can go back and look.

We've increased our goal back up to 90% and we'll work towards that goal.

I think there was a concern that we were trying to shoot for a golfball-size hail

that was much -- for a goal
that was much lower.

So the idea is to shoot for
something higher.

That is a projected number.

It's not going to exactly
happen that way, but over
the course of the next year
we'll certainly strive for
that goal.

>> Riley: Maybe once we
hit that point we can talk
about doing better in coming
years.

I want to congratulate you
on the improved prospect
even if we haven't done it
as of this date.

Things are better than they
were a few months ago.

I had a question on the
previous slide on the budget
highlights.

The phase two subchapter e
design standards and i
wanted to know if you had a
quick update on where we are
on that.

>> We're working on some
right now.

We're trying to provide a
little bit more flexibility
regarding building glazing,
kind of like covering the
windows and things like
that.

Also we're trying to take
the regulations that we have
for larger sites and trying
to group them together.

Right now it's difficult to
work through the commercial
design standards because
there are bits and pieces
that are kind of strung out
through the commercial
design standards and trying
to bring those back
together.

We're also trying to add
some clarity to those things
it where you're doing some
small additions.

At what point do you
actually kick in commercial

design standards?

So we're working with
stakeholders right now.

It's not something that
happens overnight.

We'll be working with them
and trying to bring that
forward.

But those are probably the
three larger areas that
we're looking at bringing
some clarity and changes to
to hopefully make it easier
for everyone to comply.

>> Riley: There have been
concerns expressed about
subchapter e and how well it
works.

So just so we'll know, of
the various efforts you
mentioned do any of those
involve wholesale assessment
of subchapter e, revisiting
how well it works and ways
that can be made more
effective or is that kind
after larger, more holistic
stakeholder effort that
we'll have to look through
in the future?

>> I think it is an ongoing
effort and certainly we're
discussing a code rewrite
and we'll be looking at how
these design things
interact.

But as an ongoing process,
not a quick fix to

commercial design standards
to make it perfect from
everybody's standpoint.

>> Riley: You raise an
interesting point because
the -- of course the rewrite
of the code is proceeding
really independently of the
review of subchapter e.

And how do you see those two
efforted meshing.

Do you see that subchapter e
might be improved based on
conversations that take
place in the course of the
whole code rewrite?

Or is there or is there
something else that you have
in mind?

>> I think the question to
your question is yes,
whether you're talking about
commercial design standard
or other sections of the
code.

As we go in the code rewrite
there is really an emphasis
of making it predictable,
being consistent, more
simple for any user to use,
whether it's a developer or
neighborhood representative
or staff.

And so taking a look at
those in the context of a
larger quota is very
important not only in
looking at the code
regulations themselves or

the commercial design
standards.

>> Riley: Okay.

So we have a lot of work
ahead of us on both the
whole code rewrite and
(indiscernible) in
particular.

Thanks, greg.

>> Martinez: Greg, back in
the spring some folks had
suggestions about the
turnaround time for
inspections and site plan
reviews.

I wanted to ask, have you
been in talks with some of
the private sector folks

about what they considered
kind of a third-party
ombudsman, facilitator
person?

>> We took a look at
certainly the third party.

It's a little bit more
difficult in austin to use
third party.

Some of the neighboring
communities, like cedar
park.

We have some unique
developments related to
austin, whether its
McMANSION REGULATIONS OR
Commercial design standards.

So it makes it more

difficult to actually farm
out to a third party.

They actually would have to
sign off.

We might actually be paying
more for that service in
order for those folks to
actually look at providing a
review service for
commercial design standards
McMANSION.

And actually lessens our
flexibility of staff to make
a decision to approve
because we're basically
transferring that to that
third party.

I think some of the things
that we've done as far as

adding the positions that we have will make it easier for quick turnaround, which is very important for those commercial users trying to move into the tenant space quicker.

So we're trying to place more emphasis on that.

So I think we heard from the development community, small businesses, large businesses about trying to occupy those spaces more quickly.

That that was really an important piece in moving them into the spaces and getting them open.

Some of the other things

that we've done over the
past year, just to catch up,
as far as using some over
time and temporaries, i
think that has helped
tremendously in the
commercial building plan.

>> Martinez: What about
things like an engineering
approval?

If we had a process where
engineers could become
certified by the city of
austin, we still recover the
traditional fees, but they
could add a fee on top of
that.

So as a private developer it
may be worth it to me to go
pay a few extra bucks

knowing that I'm going to
get an engineer's stamp on
this in a return time that
is more conducive to the
project times that I'm on.

>> We have looked at and are
continuing to look at that.

As you may recall before the
budget amendment, some
places, for instance, like
dallas, offer an accelerated
review where that money
would go to basically funds
paying for overtime of staff
people.

And we are looking at that
as something that the
development community is
certainly interesting in
paying that extra money in

order to receive that extra
service for an after hour
review.

>> Martinez: Great.

Thank you.

Councilmember morrison.

>> Morrison: I'll try and
be brief because I know we
have four minutes.

I'll take one.

>> Martinez: I can hang
out a little bit longer.

>> Morrison: Great.

Appreciate that.

I had the opportunity to
meet with you, greg, and
city manager, and the brain
trust of staff, if you ask
me, on our city code, to
talk about the land
development code, the ldc
rewrite.

And I just wanted to share
that with my colleagues
here.

And I think that -- I know
staff is developing a
process for how that's all
going to work, thinking
about consultants, and we
expect maybe to have a
broader conversation.

If I recall properly at the
planning commission at cpt,

our comprehensive plan and
transportation committee,
and then also with the whole
council.

So I appreciate that because
as councilmember riley
brought up, it is
complicated.

How we align -- we can't
stop everything while we
rewrite the code, but how we
align that.

I do have a question about
the design standards.

It's one of the budget
highlights.

Does that mean that there
are some budget impacts to

that or is that a big effort
that you're -- that is part
of this budget?

>> No.

We can work with the
commercial design standard
changes in-house right now.

When we talk about doing the
code rewrite, certainly
we'll be looking at more
holistically.

But we're working with
in-house staff right now on
changes to subchapter e.

>> Morrison: Okay.

And I did -- I think george
adams sent out a memo some

months ago that had the changes as they currently stand.

And one thing of course that stood out to me, which had been a pretty controversial issue and had been dropped, was the neighborhood site design standards.

And I know that there's a lot of interest in that.

So will that be -- are some of the neighborhood associations part of that stakeholder group?

>> I believe there are -- i believe I can get back to you and tell you who is actually participating.

>> Morrison: Okay.

That would be great.

And I notice there are three
neighborhood plans.

Can you tell which ones
those are?

>> We've been on the
northside of the river and
so we're heading back south
and picking up three
neighborhoods on southside
of austin, south manchaca,
garrison park, and westgate.

And those are the three that
you've actually kicked off
that process and we've
started that, working in

those neighborhoods already.

>> Morrison: Great.

And another thing we had talked to the city manager about is the potential of doing an update to the dove springs neighborhood plan as sort of a way to align city resources with the great work that's going on down there.

Do you have any schedule for updates to other neighborhood plans?

>> No, but I can get back to you and I'll also explore with parks and the health department about their efforts that are in dove

springs right now.

>> Morrison: That's great.

And it made me think a little bit more broadly, and that is that we might think about just in general trying to do some updates to the neighborhoods that might have high needs that have other things going along at the same time.

Just to make sure that we can leverage all that.

And then this I think is probably not a pdr question, but I notice in the newspaper today on the front page talking about waller creek and funding and the

facelift part of it, how
it's going to be funded.

There was a comment by staff
that there was eight million
dollars in our current
budget that will be going to
that effort beyond the
\$13 million in bonds, and
then they thought they could
cobble together nine million
dollars next year.

So this would be a budget
question for me and that is
where is that funding coming
from?

>> Well, I had heard about
the eight million.

I'm struggling a little bit
about the cobbling piece.

I'll have to get back to
you.

We'll get you some
information to explain what
was said in the paper.

>> Morrison: All right.

Thank you.

>> Martinez: Councilmember
tovo.

>> Tovo: This may be
somewhat related.

I see the budget highlights
page mentions waller creek
and some other projects.

But the daytime funding

project, streetscape
improvement projects, phase
two, subchapter e design
standards, I see -- my basic
question is where are these
in our budget data so that
we can see what the cost
associated with these are?

And in particular the
downtown (indiscernible)
project and the streetscape
improvement project?

>> I don't have the page
number off the top of my
head but I can give that
we will be coming back
next month and will brief
you on the downtown way
finding plan.

So just so you know, that's

coming up next month on the
27th.

We'll work on phase two of
the way finding and that
consists more of the
engineering and the design
elements of that.

But I'll get back with you
on the page number.

>> Tovo: I tried to look
through quickly and I don't
see those -- I don't see --
I don't see these reflected
in our budget document in a
way that would allow me to
determine what the cost
associated with those are.

And samsung and apple, same
thing.

So if those are indeed
highlights of the project --

>> I think those are just to
let you know that there are
things that may be coming
that may effect us.

That probably would not be
found in the budget
documents.

[One moment, please, for
change in captioners]
.. it's making them more
efficient.

Can you tell us just briefly
where we are on that effort
to try to make our process
more modernized and update
our process.

>> In the last three months
people I have
have actually started to
look at different programs
that are out there.

We're also looking at our
existing program, amanda,
how we can make enhancements
to bring us closer to
electronic plan review.

We have limited funds within
our budget right now to
begin that process and look
at those packages that we
would bring in before we
would probably go forward,
we would make sure our
stakeholders are aware of
that process, they are still
able to work with us about

making [inaudible].

We've in the past year or so asked for some electronic information up front with our current application, but people bring in those plans are already in electronic format but they are not used right now for the actual review by my reviewers.

>> Riley: Do you have any sense of time frame in terms of when we would be ready to take plans [inaudible]?

>> I think I would probably want to get back with you on a schedule we have.

I don't think it's a firm schedule at the moment.

I might be able to come up
with some tentative
milestones.

>> Riley: Appreciate all
your work on that and I know
a lot of folks in the
development community would
appreciate [inaudible].

>> Martinez: It doesn't
look like there's any more
questions so we stand
adjourned.

Or do you have -- is there a
last slide of -- of what's
next and when so the public
will know?

>> We actually covered that
as one of our opening

slides.

What's next is on wednesday
we're going to be back with
presentations from our
public safety departments,
our two major utilities,
energy and water, also
resource recovery and code
compliance will be
presenting on wednesday.

There are budget and tax
rate hearings scheduled for
august 23rd and
august 30th where the
community can come down and
talk to council, provide
their input on the budget
and tax rate, and then
budget readings and adoption
is set to occur
september 10th through the

12th.

That's the remainder of the
process.

>> Martinez: It's my
understanding that the
august 30th meeting is a
regularly scheduled council
, but
it's only a public hearing
on budget.

>> It's only a public
hearing on the budget.

It's once we had to work
with the mayor's office in
order to meet our truth
statement and have
everything line up for
budget adoptions.

>> Martinez: Okay.

Thank you.